



# Scott Spouses Newsletter

FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES ONLY; NO FEDERAL ENDORSEMENT IMPLIED

## Unsolicited Troop Mail Discouraged

To bolster force protection, the general public is urged not to send unsolicited mail, care packages or donations to service members forward deployed unless you are a family member, loved one or personal friend.

On Oct. 30, 2001, the Department of Defense (DoD) suspended the "Operation Dear Abby" and "Any Servicemember" mail programs due to force protection concerns. Although these programs provide an excellent means of support to friends and loved ones stationed overseas, they also provide an avenue to introduce hazardous substances or materials into the mail system from unknown sources. Unsolicited mail, packages and donations from organizations and individuals also compete for limited airlift space used to transport supplies, war-fighting materiel and mail from family and loved ones.

Recently, DoD has become aware of organizations and individuals who continue to support some form of the "Any Servicemember" program by using the names and addresses of individual servicemembers and unit addresses. These programs are usually supported by well-intentioned, thoughtful and patriotic groups who are simply unaware of the new risks facing deployed military forces. Some individuals and groups publicize the names and addresses of service members, ships or units on Web sites, with good intentions. The result, however, is a potential danger to the troops they wish to support.

DoD cannot support creative and well-intentioned efforts that defeat force protection measures, but can instead recommend alternatives to mail and donation programs. To show support to troops overseas, the following are recommended.

Log on to the following Web sites to show support, to include greeting cards, virtual "thank you" cards and calling card donations to help troops stay in contact with loved ones:

<http://www.defendamerica.mil/>  
<http://www.usocares.org/>  
<http://www.anyservicemember.navy.mil>

Visit Department of Veterans Affairs hospitals and nursing homes. Volunteer your services to honor veterans who served in past conflicts.

Local Red Cross chapters and USO organizations may also accept contributions and bulk donations. Organizations and businesses wishing to make bulk donations can send written proposals to the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense's Military Community and Family Policy Council addressed to the attention of the Contributions Committee at 4000 Defense Pentagon, Washington, DC 20301-4000.

All establishments are highly encouraged to first check with these agencies prior to initiating any collection drives.

Monetary donations can be made to any of the following relief societies:

- ✳ Army Emergency Relief Society- (703-325-0463) or [www.aerhq.org](http://www.aerhq.org)
- ✳ Navy/Marine Corps Relief Society- (703-696-4904) or [www.nmcrrs.org](http://www.nmcrrs.org)
- ✳ Air Force Aid Society-[www.afas.org](http://www.afas.org)
- ✳ Coast Guard Mutual Assistance-[www.cgmahq.org](http://www.cgmahq.org)

Mail from family members and loved ones has always been encouraged and the military mail system will continue to work hard to get that mail to servicemembers overseas.

### Letters and donations to our troops

A Department of Defense moratorium on "Any Servicemember" card and letter programs issued October 2003 is still in effect.

Letters and cards intended for servicemembers here or abroad will not be accepted from the general public due to increased security measures and the logistics of distribution.

Alternative ways to express public support include:

**E-mail**—Log on to the website [www.defendamerica.mil](http://www.defendamerica.mil) to thank the United States military or go to [www.anyservicemember.navy.mil](http://www.anyservicemember.navy.mil) to send a personal message.

**Volunteerism**—Take over the volunteer duties of a servicemember who is now deployed or busy with additional duties. Many servicemembers volunteer to coach children's sports teams, feed the homeless, visit veterans, and tutor in after-school programs. There is a wealth of opportunities in every community.

**Contributions**—Military relief societies are accepting donations. These include the Army Emergency Relief Society, the Navy and Marine Corps Relief Society, and the Federal Employee Education and Assistance Fund.

Messages of appreciation and encouragement are important to the men and women of the United States military. The Department of Defense encourages businesses, schools, and community organizations to continue identifying innovative approaches in demonstrating their support.

# Exceptional Parent Magazine Resource Guide Available Free

The Exceptional Parent Magazine Resource Guide is now available via Military OneSource for free! You can order the guide online and it will be delivered to your door at no cost to you. The Exceptional Parent Magazine donated 20,000 Resource Guides for military families with special needs. If you were to purchase the guide it would cost

you \$20! It's a wonderful resource for families moving from State to State and for those who are searching for resources on a specific disability. Please help spread the word.

To locate the resource guide, go online to [www.airforceonesource.com/](http://www.airforceonesource.com/) and enter **user id: airforce** and **password: ready**. Under **Unit/Location**,

click the drop down box and look for *Scott AFB, IL*. Once you get to the home page, click on the *Disability* link on the left side navigation. You will see a *Family Resources* bullet. Click on *Special Needs for School-aged Children* and scroll down to *Booklets*. Please click *Add to Order* and follow prompts for shipping information.

## New Law to Affect SGLI Payments, Premiums

WASHINGTON, May 18, 2005 – Defense and Veterans Affairs officials are ironing out details of programs that will expand benefits provided through Servicemembers' Group Life Insurance.

The \$82 billion supplemental legislation signed into law by President Bush May 11 increases maximum SGLI coverage to \$400,000 and provides payouts of up to \$100,000 for servicemembers with traumatic injuries, explained Stephen Wurtz, the VA's deputy assistant director for insurance.

The increased SGLI coverage will take effect Sept. 1, and the so-called "traumatic SGLI" benefit, December 1. Wurtz said the legislation directs that both benefits will be retroactive to Oct. 7, 2001.

Traumatic SGLI benefits will be retroactive for troops who have lost limbs, eyesight or speech or received other traumatic injuries as a direct result of injuries received during Operation Iraqi Freedom or Operation Enduring Freedom. The benefit does not apply to servicemembers suffering from disease.

The retroactive coverage increase is payable as a result of deaths in either operation, or under other conditions prescribed by the secretary of defense, Wurtz said.

Servicemembers enrolled in the SGLI program will notice an increase in

their premiums when the increases take effect. The traumatic SGLI benefit will be rolled into the basic SGLI program and will likely cost about \$1 a month, Wurtz said.

Troops opting for maximum SGLI coverage—\$400,000 vs. the current \$250,000—will see their monthly premiums increase from \$16.25 to \$26, Wurtz said. This is based on the rate of 6.5 cents per \$1,000 of insurance coverage.

SGLI coverage is currently available in \$10,000 increments, but as of Sept. 1, the increments will increase to \$50,000.

Because the rates have not changed, servicemembers who retain \$250,000 or less coverage will see no increase in their premiums, Wurtz said, except for the \$1 "traumatic SGLI" premium.

While these expanded benefits will be provided retroactively, affected servicemembers won't be charged retroactive payments, he said. DoD will absorb that cost.

In a new twist introduced through the supplemental legislation, troops with dependents must get their spouse's approval to purchase less than the full amount of SGLI coverage. In the case of members who are not married, notice will be provided to the designated beneficiary when the member purchases less than the maximum coverage.



The new traumatic SGLI benefit is designed to provide "a quick infusion of cash" for cash-strapped families of troops recuperating from traumatic injuries received in the line of duty, Wurtz said.

Compensation will range from \$25,000 to \$100,000, and is designed to help families of severely wounded troops leave their homes and jobs to be with their loved one during recovery. "These families incur a lot of expenses, and this is designed to help them financially," Wurtz said.

While VA staff members consult with DoD to write regulations that will put the new SGLI benefits into effect, Wurtz said, "lots and lots of details have to be worked out."

Among outstanding issues is the fact that the expanded SGLI coverage is part of the supplemental legislation package that funds operations only through Sept. 30. That's 30 days after the new SGLI limit takes effect and two months before the traumatic SGLI benefit begins.

Wurtz said VA is confident Congress will resolve this issue before there's any lapse in coverage.

VA will continue to oversee and control the SGLI program.

By Donna Miles  
American Forces Press Service

## Eagle's Wings Special Needs Family Picnic Set for 4 June

The chapel-sponsored program for families with special needs children is hosting a FREE picnic at 10:30 am on June 4 at the pavilions in front of fire station #1 and



behind the Airman Leadership School.

Eagles Wings is a support network for families who have a special needs member.

For more information about the picnic or the Eagle's Wings program, please call A1C Rhina Portillochacon at 256-2600.

## Summer Enrichment Activity Ideas

Summer is here. For those attending most public and private schools, that means summer vacation. This is a great opportunity for your children to learn! Just because school is out doesn't mean that the learning should come to a halt. This is a great opportunity for you to help your child either get remedial help or look ahead for the upcoming school year.

Now certainly there are those of us who are not naïve enough to think that this idea is going to be received well by all children. Nonetheless, research shows that children who are involved in summer enrichment activities do better in school. Does that mean you need to enroll your child in a summer program or secure a tutor? Not necessarily.



While there are many programs with a lot of merit, one could simply work with one's child without the use of commercial services. One could purchase a summer bridge book. These are plentiful and can easily be found at a local bookstore or teacher supply store. Most of these books are published specifically for summer learning with your child. You might ask your child to complete one or two pages a day to brush up on their skills.

Yes, many of us hold full-time jobs and are tired when we get home. We may have more than one school-aged child at home and all of this sounds like a lot of work. The fact is that not only will your child benefit academically, but, if you handle yourself in a positive manner even if your child makes mistakes, your child will also benefit emotionally. The added attention you give your child will pay dividends in the long run. Be sure to remain positive in your interactions with your child. A smile goes a long way for a child's self-esteem and happiness.

There are lots of other educational

opportunities during this time between school years. Don't forget the wonderful opportunities available to us in the local area to include such places as the St Louis Science Center, the Missouri Botanical Garden, the Magic House, Lewis and Clark Historic Site, Cahokia Mounds, the Cahokia Courthouse. An excellent resource of sites to visit in Illinois can be found through the Illinois Historic Preservation Agency (<http://state.il.us/hpa/hs/historicsites.htm>) and through an Illinois Homeschooling site found at web address <http://homeschooling.gomilpitas.com/trips/IllinoisTrips.htm>. One of the Web links found on this site is for the Illinois HOUSE Field Trip Ideas for Your Homeschooled Students. This site, found at Web address <http://www.illinoishouse.org/fldtrip.htm>, shows a map of Illinois by county and all one has to do is click on the county one is interested in visiting and a list of places of interest is provided.

Keep learning this summer!

*Dr. Cindy Doil, School Liaison Officer*

## Military Families Allowed to go Past Airport Checkpoints

Every second counts just before loved ones deploy across the globe.

To help military families savor these final moments, the Transportation Security Administration has established a program to allow access to boarding gates without tickets.

Many stateside airlines offer gate passes to non-ticketed family members who would like to drop troops off at the boarding gates or pick them up there on their return home.

"TSA has always worked with the military and their families to allow them to say their goodbyes past the checkpoints," Deirdre O'Sullivan, a TSA spokeswoman said of the pass program during a telephone interview Friday. Though it is not new, it is something military members can be reminded of periodically.

In an e-mail to Stars and Stripes, TSA said it has asked its federal security directors, as well as all airlines and airports, to adopt procedures that allow

airline gate access to military family members whenever possible.

However, while TSA provides guidelines for allowing non-ticketed individuals into restricted areas to air carriers, the final decision is a function of the carriers and the airports, according to the TSA e-mail. Therefore passes may not always be available.

O'Sullivan said anyone wishing a pass should just ask for one. She said the passes are created and distributed at airline ticket counters, and she suggested family members collect the passes while the troops obtain their boarding passes.

If a gate pass is provided, then it must be shown along with a government-issued photo ID at screening checkpoints. Family members and their property will be required to go through the security screening process.

O'Sullivan said larger airports with a big United Service Organizations presence, such as the Baltimore/Washington

International Airport, are used to accommodating military family members.

"Within parameters necessary to maintain security in the sterile area, TSA fully supports allowing military family members to accompany deploying servicemembers or to meet servicemembers returning from deployment," the TSA e-mail stated.

In cases involving arriving or deploying military charter flights, military representatives should contact TSA on behalf of family members, TSA officials said.

O'Sullivan said TSA has no control of airline activity in foreign countries and said she does not think these passes are offered at overseas airports.

But, "you can ask," she said, since airlines that offer the passes stateside might have similar policies overseas.

*By Jessica Inigo, Stars and Stripes  
From the 3 May 2005 issue of U.S. Air Force AIM Points*



## FSC Family Readiness Office

How long will your spouse be gone this time? Military marriages are constantly tested as deployments create tough challenges for the entire family. The stress caused from the uncertainty of a separation can place a tremendous burden on relationships.

Research makes it clear that couples who recognize the challenges, and work through their challenges together, can actually strengthen their relationships. The mere act of working together to solve a problem becomes an opportunity for growth.

Learning to communicate well is one of the tools to survive long separations. Even though miles separate you, good communication will encourage both of you to share your joys and sorrows, understand each other's thoughts and feelings, and solve problems together. Agreeing on a plan for how you will communicate when it's not always possible to pick up the phone is most important. Before your spouse leaves, talk about how you will share the daily events of your lives by sending cards, letters or using e-mail. Ask your spouse what kind of information is most important to receive. Learn each other's expectations. In the end, it will make for an easier time away. Through conflict and compromise, understanding and trust, staying strong as a couple can be a challenge no matter how long you've been together.

Please visit your Family Support Center's Family Readiness Office or give them a call at 256-8668 to learn more about support groups and other activities for deployment families occurring on base.

*"Distance between two hearts is not an obstacle; rather a great reminder of just how strong true love can be."*

—Author unknown

## Helpful Websites



### Blue Star Mothers of America, Inc.

<http://www.bluestarmothers.org/index.php>

We are mothers who now have, or have had, children serving in the military. We are a non-profit (501[c]3) service organization supporting each other and our children while promoting patriotism.

As stated in the U.S. Code as of 01/26/98; Title 36; Section 943: The purposes of the corporation shall be: To perpetuate the Blue Star Mothers of America, Inc., and the memory of all the men and women who have served our country as members of the Armed Forces; the further object of this organization shall be patriotic, educational, social, and for service; to maintain true allegiance to the Government of the United States; to educate our members and others not to divulge military, naval, or other Government information; to assist in veterans' ceremonies, to attend patriotic rallies and meetings; to foster true democracy; to care for the unsupported mothers who gave their sons to the service of the Nation; to aid in bringing about recognition of the need of permanent civilian defense for each community and to ever be alert against invasion of un-American activities; to uphold the American institutions of freedom, justice, and equal rights, and to defend the United States from all enemies.

The Blue Star Mothers of America, Inc. is a non-partisan, non-political organization. We do not support any political candidate nor do we endorse any religious organization. The military represents all aspects of America as does our organization. Links to our website does not represent an endorsement.

An outstanding article, listed in the DoD news link website (available online at [http://www.defenselink.mil/news/Mar2000/n03282000\\_20003282.html](http://www.defenselink.mil/news/Mar2000/n03282000_20003282.html)), gives a short history about our organization and the Blue Star Banner.

## Expeditionary Family Event Calendar for June 2005

Date	Event & Time	Location	Phone
3	<b>Brown Bag Reunion Lunch, 11:30 am-12:30 pm</b>	<b>Family Support Center</b>	<b>256-8668</b>
3-4	Case Lot Sale	Commissary	256-2783
4	Eagle's Wings Family Picnic, 10:30 am	Pavilion near Airman Leadership School	256-2600
6	<b>Town Hall Meeting, 5:00-7:00 pm</b>	<b>Rockwell Hall (beside Pronto Pizza)</b>	<b>256-8668</b>
7	Comm. Youth Transition & Education Council, 1:00 pm	375AW Conference Room	256-9595
10	Give Parents a Break, 6:00-10:00 pm	Child Development Center & Youth Center	256-8668
11	O'Fallon Salute to Scott Day, 11:00 am-3:00 pm	Katy Cavins Community Park in O'Fallon, IL	256-4241
14	Enlisted Spouses' Club Meeting, 7:00 pm	Hospital Dining Hall (basement)	233-4690
16	Key Spouse Meeting, 6:00 pm	Family Support Center	256-8668
18	<b>Picnic in the Park, 11:00 am-1:00 pm</b>	<b>Pavilion near Airman Leadership School</b>	<b>256-8668</b>
21	Book Discussion Group, 6:30 pm	Base Library	256-5100
22	Hampel Family Circus, 6:00-7:30 pm	Base Theater	256-8668
25	<b>Hearts Apart Breakfast, 8:00-9:00 am</b>	<b>Nightingale Inn Dining Facility (near dorms)</b>	<b>256-8668</b>

- Events in bold are specifically Expeditionary Family Events for families of deployed members
- Please call the number listed to ensure your place at the designated event/activity

This newsletter is a product of the Scott AFB Integrated Delivery System (IDS) Team.  
Find more helpful information online at <http://public.scott.amc.af.mil/review/integrated/index.cfm>.